

9

17. An endoscope according to claim 14 and further comprising a disposable cover assembly module fastened over said steerable articulation section and having an optical window at its distal tip.

18. A flexible fiber-optic endoscope comprising:

a plurality of independently removable modules wherein:

a first module comprises a hollow body assembly, said hollow body assembly including handle means for holding said endoscope during operation thereof;

a tubular member module captivated at a proximal end within said hollow body assembly and independently removable therefrom as a module comprises a hollow, flexible, tubular member having a steerable articulation section at a distal end thereof, and control means for remotely manipulating said steerable articulation section;

a second module captivated at a proximal end within said hollow body assembly and independently removable therefrom as a module comprises a tubular fiber optic assembly incorporating an objective lens at its distal

10

end, and an optical image guide for conducting an image formed by said objective lens to a proximal end of said fiber optic assembly; and

a third module captivated within and independently removable from said hollow body assembly comprises an optical eyepiece assembly located at a proximal end of said hollow body assembly for viewing images carried by said image guide.

19. An endoscope according to claim 18 wherein said steerable articulation section comprises a tubular polymer member having circumferential voids for articulation.

20. An endoscope according to claim 18 wherein said steerable articulation section comprises a bellows member for providing articulation.

21. An endoscope according to claim 18 and further comprising a disposable cover assembly fastened over said steerable articulation section and having an optical window at its distal tip.

* * * * *